

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 28, 2018

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310

Dear Assistant Secretary R.D. James:

As members of the bipartisan Senate Great Lakes Task Force, we are writing to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to allocate funding in the fiscal year 2019 (FY2019) work plan and request funding in FY2020 for the following projects of critical importance to the wellbeing of the Great Lakes and to our state and regional economies.

Asian Carp

The USACE is undertaking multiple efforts to stop Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes. These actions are critical to protecting the Great Lakes ecosystem and our \$7 billion recreational fishing and \$16 billion boating industries. Accomplishing this objective requires funding to complete the Brandon Road Lock and Dam Chief's Report and proceed to Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED); address multiple pathways for Asian carp to enter the Great Lakes; and ensure the electric dispersal barriers are operational.

To that end, we urge the USACE to allocate a total of \$23.51 million in the FY2019 work plan in the following manner:

- \$496,000 to complete the GLRMIS-Brandon Road Study and \$3.8 million for the federal portion of the funding needed to proceed to Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) work.
- \$310,000 for GLMRIS Program Management, the amount needed for the USACE to coordinate with stakeholders, participate in the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, and begin work on two additional pathways – Ohio's Little Killbuck Creek and Erie Canal – through which Asian carp could enter the Great Lakes.
- \$18.9 million for the Electric Dispersal Barriers near Romeoville, Illinois.

For the FY2020 budget, we ask that \$24.2 million be requested for the following:

- \$4.9 million for Brandon Road Preconstruction, Engineering and Design work.
- \$315,000 for GLMRIS Program Management.
- \$18.9 million for the Electric Dispersal Barriers near Romeoville, Illinois.

Soo Locks

The Soo Locks in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan serves as a gateway to transport nearly 80 million tons of goods and raw material that supply the region's manufacturing, mining, and agricultural industries. The June 29, 2018, Economic Validation Study and Post

Authorization Change Report for the Soo Lock project noted that “the strategic importance of the Soo Locks cannot be overstated.” And a report by the Department of Homeland Security concluded it was “hard to conceive” of a single piece of infrastructure more consequential in terms of impact to the economy from an unexpected and sustained closure.

It is imperative that sufficient funding be provided to operate and maintain the Soo Locks. We thank you for allocating \$57 million in the FY2018 work plan, which we understand will provide sufficient funding for major rehabilitation work at the Soo Locks for the next three years. In the FY2019 work plan, we ask that \$16.6 million be included for asset renewal work that is also needed to ensure the operation of the Locks in the coming year.

In addition to the funds necessary to maintain and operate the Soo Locks, we ask that you include \$74 million in the FY2019 work plan and \$92 million in the FY2020 budget request to enable the USACE to begin the initial work necessary to construct a second Poe-sized lock. Of the two operational locks at the Soo Locks facility, only the Poe has the necessary dimensions for the largest vessels to pass. Building a second Poe-sized lock will provide the resiliency needed to ensure this critical infrastructure remains open for commerce.

Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study

This study proposed by the USACE, in consultation with Great Lakes states, would be a first-of-its-kind effort to develop a coordinated strategy to manage and protect the Great Lakes and its 5,200-mile coastline from threats associated with lake level fluctuations, erosion, flooding, nutrient runoff, and aging infrastructure.

The robust and diverse support this study has garnered demonstrates its merits and importance. Proponents for the study include seven Great Lakes states, three USACE Districts (Chicago, Detroit, and Buffalo), and the USACE’s Great Lakes and Ohio River Division. It also has the support of the Great Lakes Commission and several federal agencies with missions in coastal management, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Geological Survey.

We were disappointed that last year’s budget did not request funding for the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study. To rectify this decision, we urge the USACE to allocate \$1.2 million for the study in the FY2019 work plan and include \$3.6 million for it in the FY2020 budget request.

We thank you for considering these important requests.

Sincerely,



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator
Co-Chair, Senate Great Lakes Task Force



ROB PORTMAN
United States Senator
Co-Chair, Senate Great Lakes Task Force



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator
Vice-Chair, Senate Great Lakes Task Force



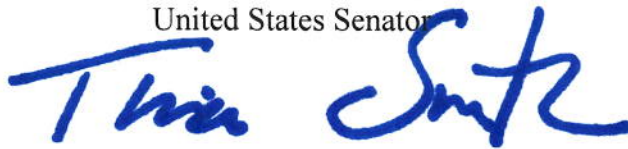
TAMMY BALDWIN
United States Senator



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RICHARD J. DURBIN
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GARY C. PETERS
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KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator

Cc: Mick Mulvaney, Director, Office of Management and Budget